

# **Sonoma County Fire Services Project**

## **Stakeholder Presentation – on Interim Report and Recommendations**

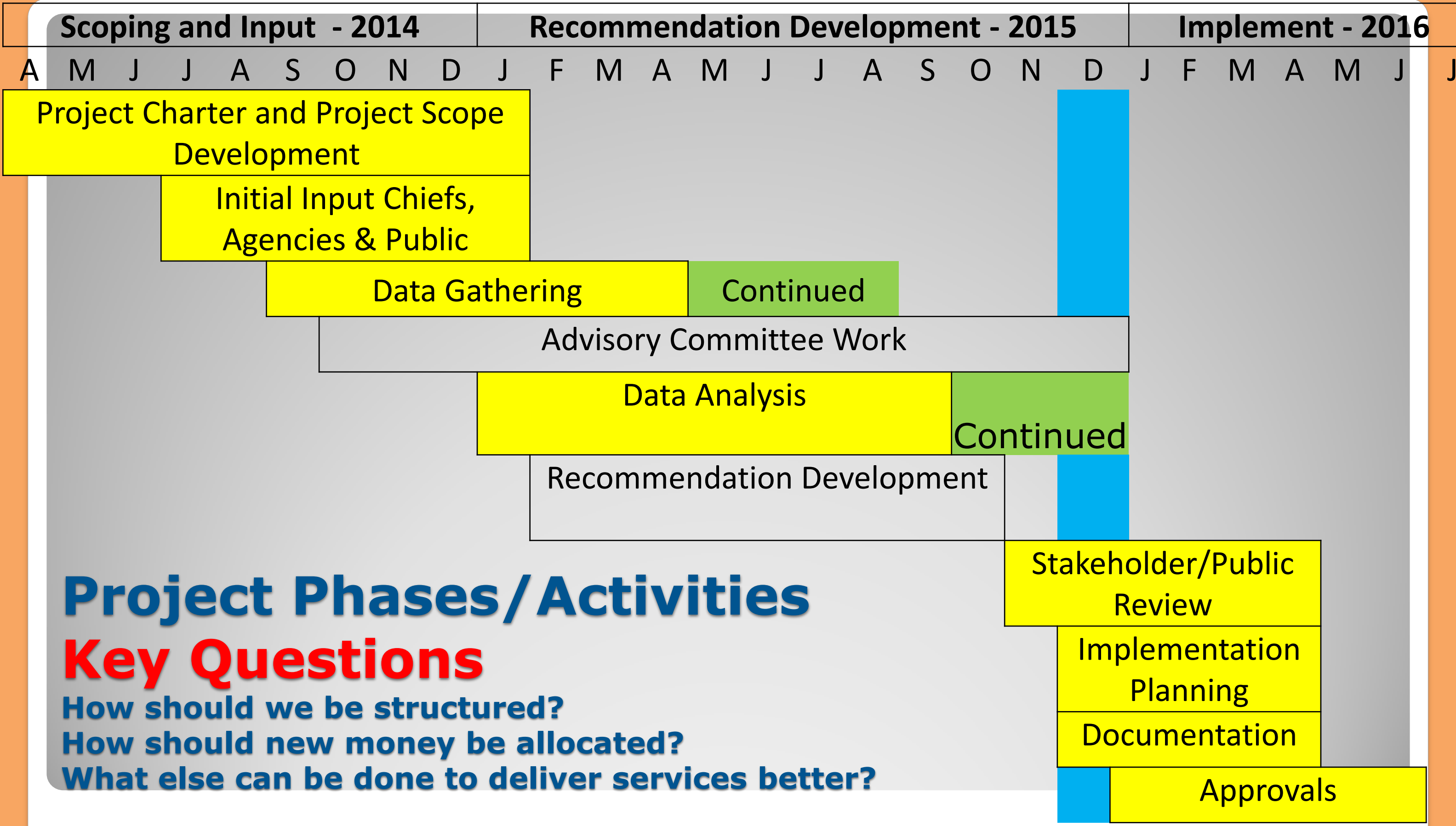
**December 2015**

# Overview

- Project Status
- Interim Report – History, Scope, Findings
- Advisory Committee Recommendations
- Board Direction
- Next Steps

# Project Status – Origin and Goal

- Ad Hoc Committee of Supervisors to address Priority
  - 2014 - McGuire & Carrillo
  - 2015 – Carrillo & Gore
- Multi year Project to come up with recommendations for more effective, efficient, and sustainable fire services system in the County



**Project Phases/Activities**

**Key Questions**

- How should we be structured?
- How should new money be allocated?
- What else can be done to deliver services better?

# A Brief History of Fire Services

- Communal efforts documented back to Roman times
- By 1800's fire departments becoming more regular part of municipal services
- Cities in Sonoma County begin depts in late 1850's
- CalFire, Volunteer Depts, and then Districts in early 1900's
- Board of Supervisors Participation
  - Separate tax for fire protection (1960), Contract Service Model
  - Fire Safety Committee, Various studies ('74,'83,'93,2001,'08-12)
  - Funding

# Summaries of prior reports

- Used to see what was recommended and implemented, barriers to further implementation, and reference material for moving forward
- Much has been done
- Key issues that keep coming up –
  - Funding
  - Consolidation
- One issue that wasn't present in the beginning but has grown over time
  - Recruitment and Retention of Volunteers

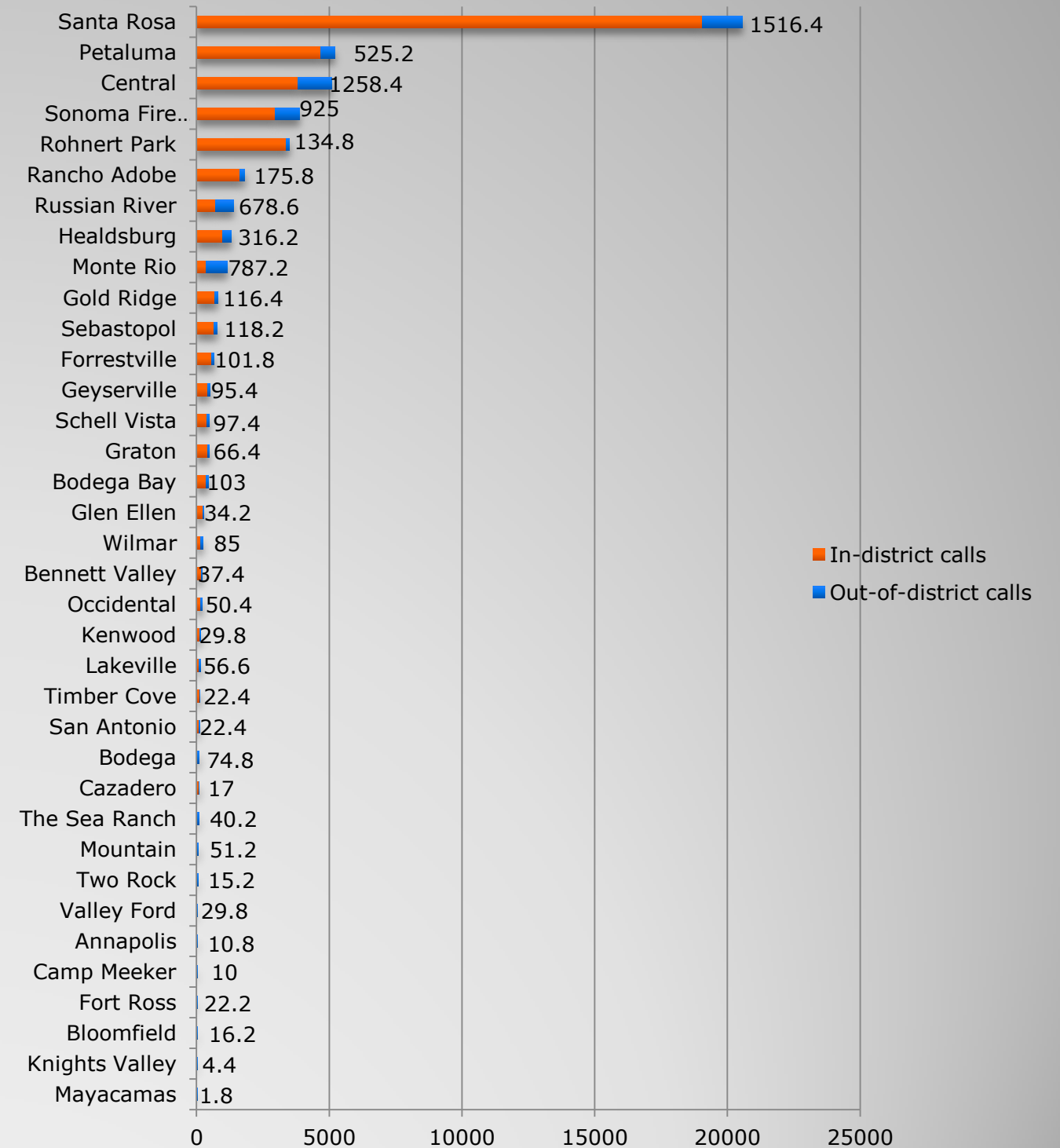
# Other Project Scope Elements

- Over 200 different comments gathered
- 50% scope suggestions/50% comments, concerns, questions
- Scope-related included:
  - Calls for service, finance, staffing, community survey, and governance models
- FAQ's to address other half
- Emergency Medical Services
- Next, will go over selected findings in scope areas and briefly look back at 32 years ago

# Calls

While most calls are in each agency's area, a significant number are outside and all agencies are assisting others

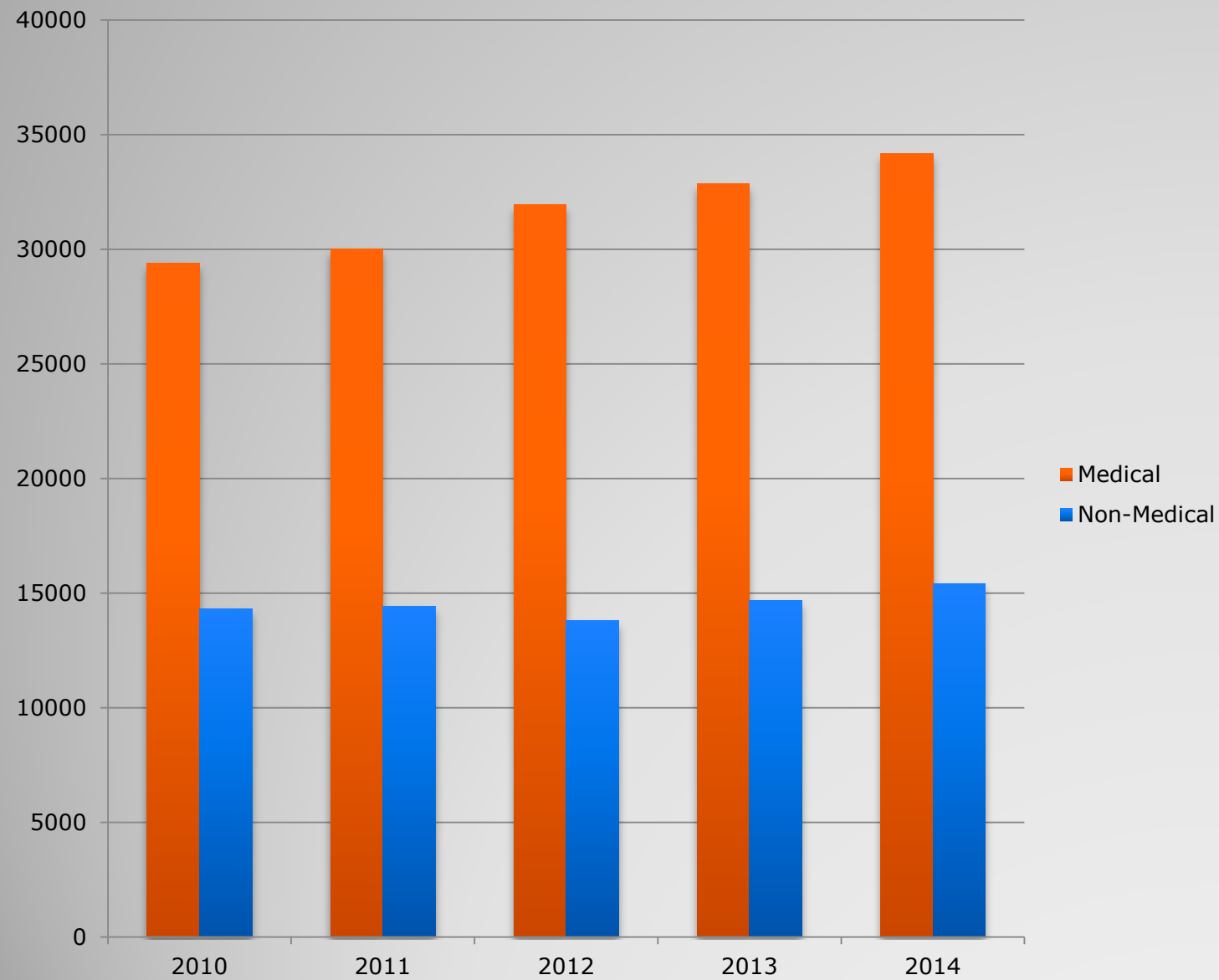
**Average Annual Responses by Agency**



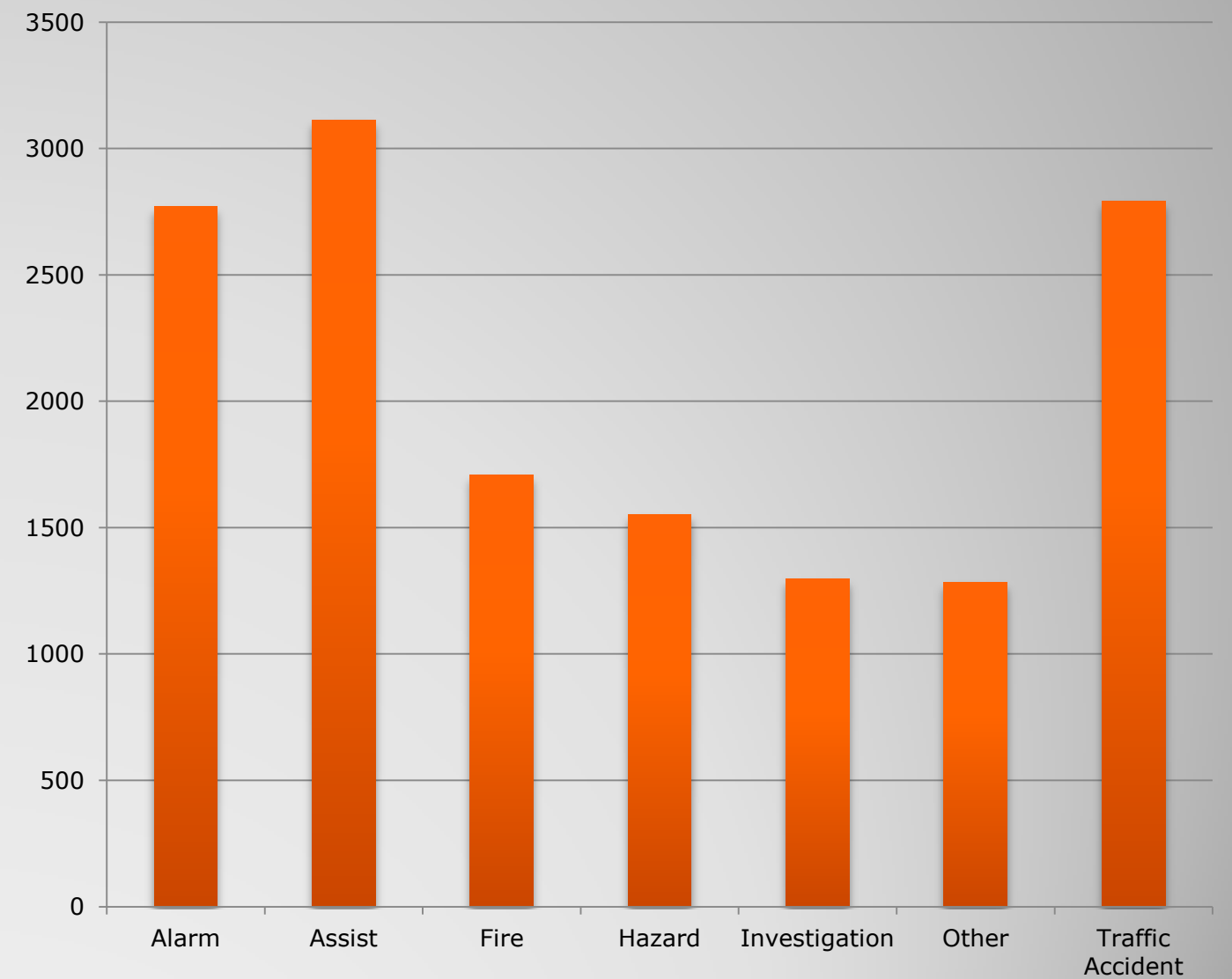


# Calls

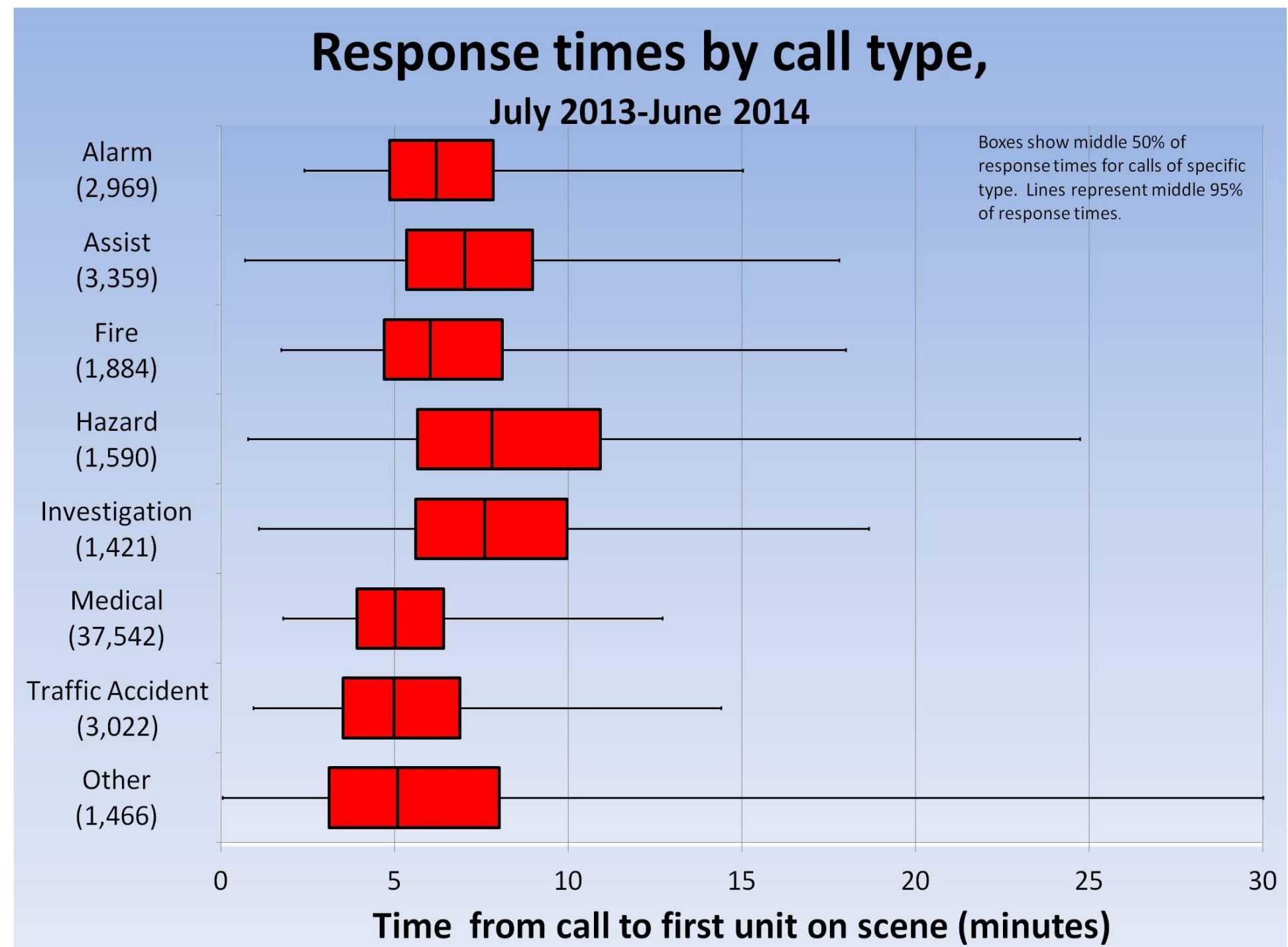
**Annual Calls by Type**



**Average Annual Calls by Type (non-medical only)**

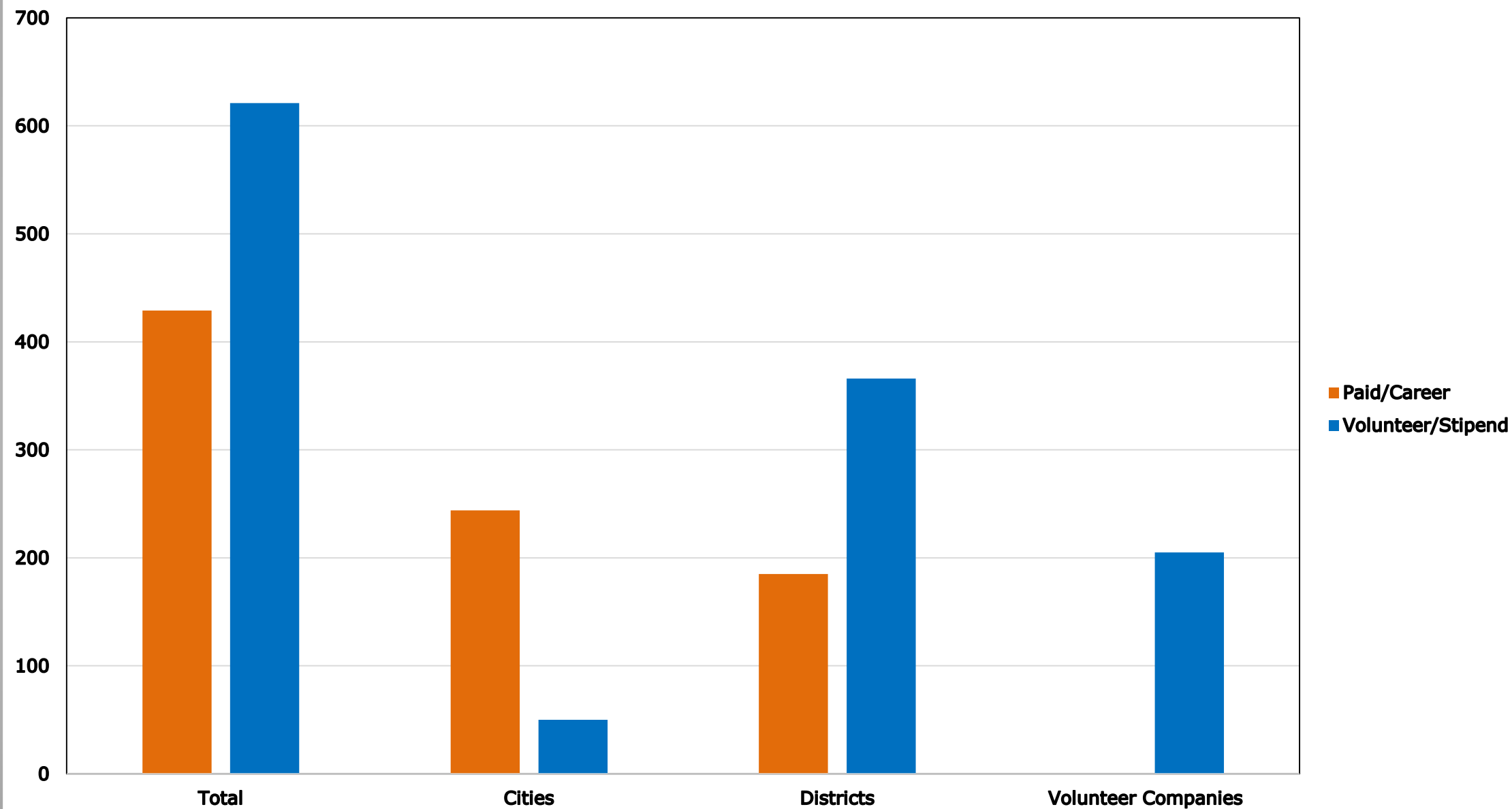


# Call Response Times: Countywide response times by call



# Staffing

**Fire responders in Sonoma County**

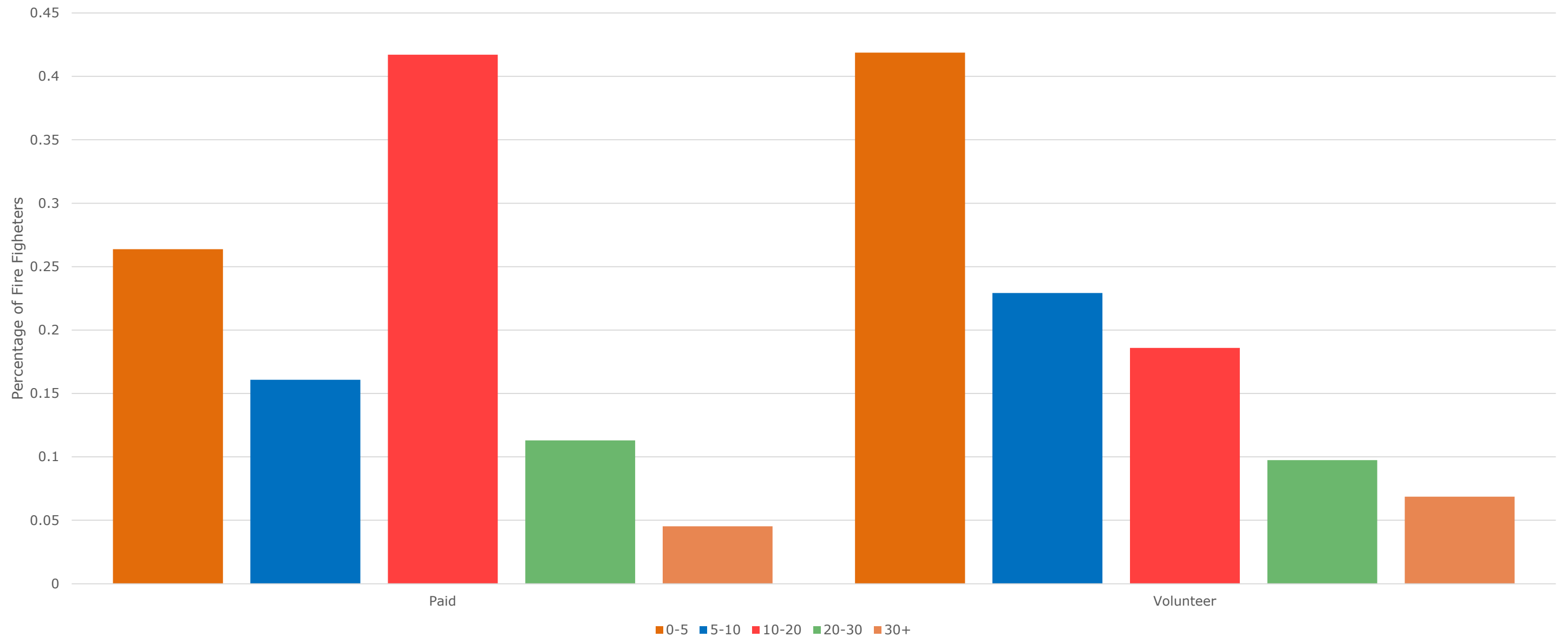


1983 Report says there were about 1000 volunteer firefighters about half in cities and half in districts.

Today, 34 of 42 agencies providing info – 1100 firefighters about 60% volunteer

# Staffing

Length of Experience (Years) of Fire Fighters



# Staffing

Age range	Total	Volunteer	Paid
Less than 20 years	9	9	0
In their 20's	241	182	54
In their 30's	243	110	133
In their 40's	188	80	108
In their 50's	151	88	63
In their 60's	89	86	3
70 or older	33	31	2
Total	954	586	363

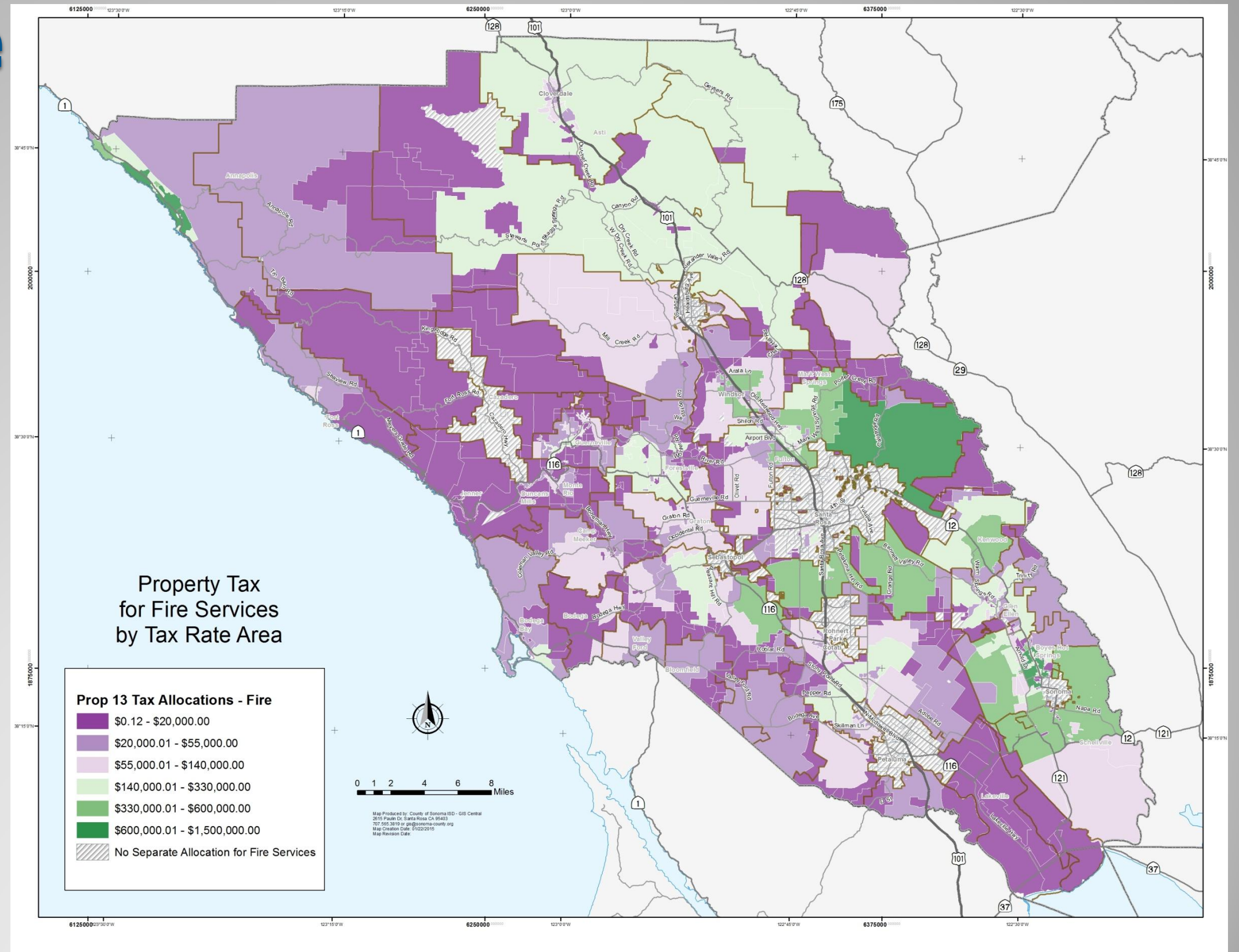
# Equipment and Facilities

Equipment type	Total	%10 yrs old or more	Oldest age
Ambulance	15	40%	15
Boat	14	43%	29
Engine	141	67%	47
Ladder Truck	2	100%	15
Other	32	63%	68
Rescue/Squad/Utility/Truck	127	50%	45
Water Tender	32	88%	39

91 Facilities - 56 listed age, 23 were less than 25 years old - \$50 million estimated for repair, addition, or replacement



**Where the  
money is:  
Property tax  
allocated to  
fire services  
by tax rate  
area**



# Finances

Average annual amounts	20 Fire Districts	14 Mostly Volunteer Districts
Salary and Benefits	\$17.3 million	\$5.1 million
Services & Supplies	\$5.2 million	\$3.2 million
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$30.3 million</b>	<b>\$11.3 million</b>
Taxes	\$25.3 million	\$9.1 million
Charges for Services	\$1.2 million	\$.001 million
Intergovernmental	\$1.4 million	\$0.8 million
Donations and Reimbursements	\$1.1 million	\$0.7 million
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$29.5 million</b>	<b>\$10.9 million</b>



# Selected Findings

- Community survey
- Comparing to 32 years ago

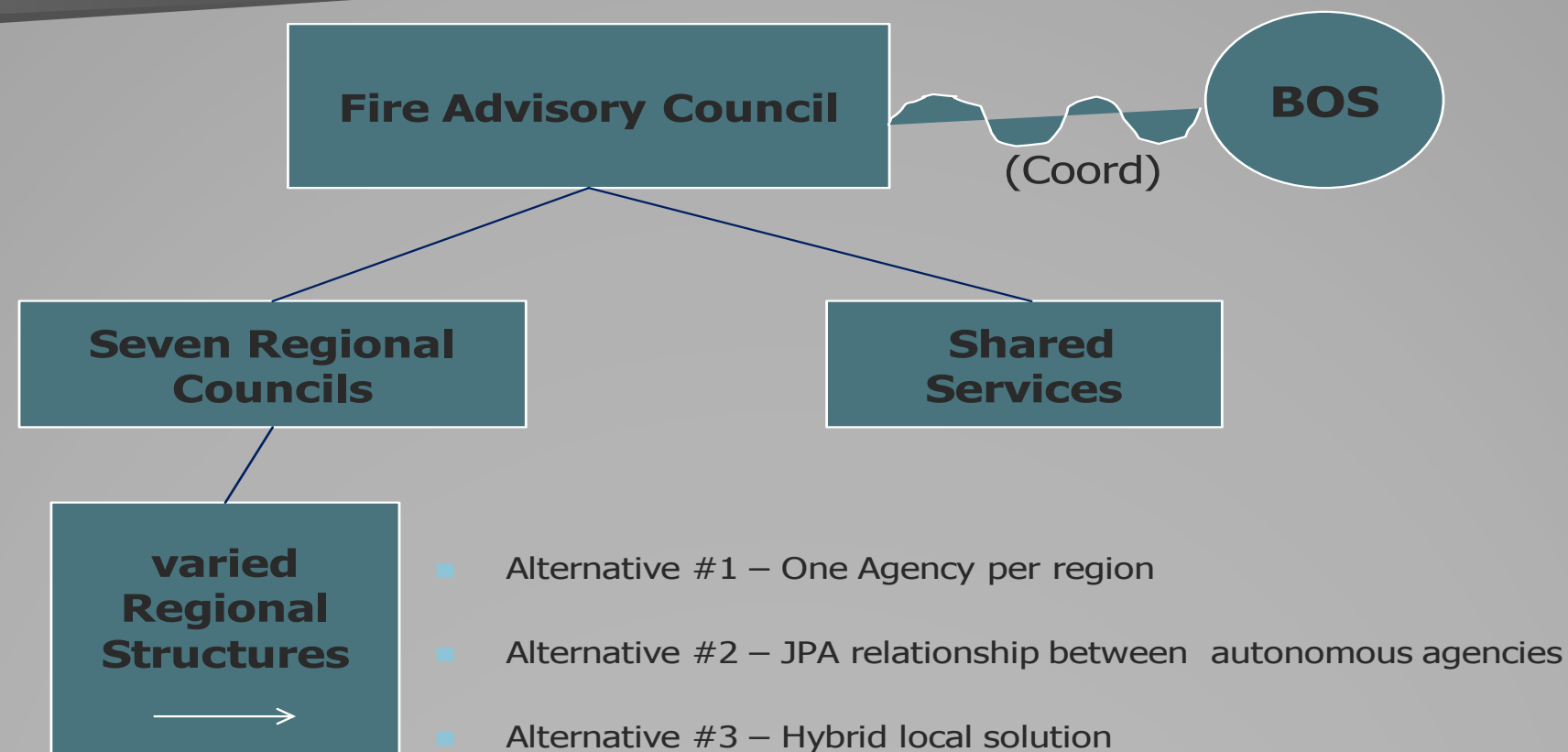
	1983	FY 13-14
Population	320,000	500,000
Total Calls for Service	13,500	50,000
Total Budget	\$11.2 million	\$82 million
Total # of Fire Agencies	52	44

# **Advisory Committee/Board Supported Recommendations -- Governance**

- Single agency providing fire services in the county should be a long-term vision
- Regional Model should be adopted now to assist with coordination and incentivize collaboration between agencies
  - 7 geographical regions based on current zones
  - Regional councils w/ reps from each agency to coordinate within region
  - One Countywide Advisory Council,
    - 9 members -- one member selected by each regional council and two selected by the Board of Supervisors
    - To coordinate centrally provided shared services in the system
    - To allocate funds to incentivize collaboration and volunteer recruitment and retention efforts in the regions
    - To advise the Board of Supervisors on fire related matters going forward

# Advisory Committee Recommendations -- Governance

## REGIONAL GOVERNANCE MODEL



## **Another Related / Board Supported Request -Governance**

- Consider creation of a new dependent district with a Board of Directors appointed by the Board of Supervisors to provide fire protection services in the unincorporated area not covered by an independent fire protection district
- Would replace CSA 40
- Feasibility study would cost approx \$50,000

# **Advisory Committee/Board Supported Recommendations – Funding FY 16**

- \$1 mil. - incentives to collaborate including
  - Costs for consolidations or mergers between agencies
  - Contributions to assist with addition of shared resources
- \$1 mil. - volunteer recruit & retention efforts countywide
- \$7.2 mil. – assist with current agency resources to avoid service reductions while transitioning
  - \$3.7 mil. Minimum 6% tax rate for fire, \$2.1 mill to replace funds shifted to schools, \$600,000 to replace taxes to redevelopment, \$800,000 to cover REDCOM dispatch costs, \$23,000 to replace property taxes lost when properties taken off the tax rolls
- \$200,000 – ensure agencies currently getting support and/or CSA 40 funding levels do not drop to point of service reductions

# **Advisory Committee/Board Supported Recommendations – Funding this yr**

- \$800,000 for dispatch costs from TOT
- \$200,000 to set up Advisory Council and complete Standards of Cover from Project funds
- And from \$990,000 already set aside
- \$100,000 to purchase Lexipol policies and procedures
- \$30,000 for grant writer to pursue volunteer recruitment and retention grant for all
- \$23,000 for replace property tax losses for properties taken off the Tax Rolls
- Remainder to complete shortfalls in two first items then proportionately to agencies with property tax losses in shift to schools



# Next Steps

- Outreach – Direct staff and willing Advisory Committee members to share recommendations to agencies and community
- Governance – Direct Staff to initiate the Councils, proceed on related request for Sonoma County Dependent Fire District Feasibility
- Funding – Direct staff to return with current year budget adjustments and options for FY 16-17
- Final Report – Direct staff to complete Final Report by July 1, 2016